



WINGS SPREAD

Randolph Air Force Base ♦ Texas

59th Year ♦ No. 46 ♦ November 23, 2005

Living Thanksgiving



Kindergartners eat turkey and other holiday fare at the annual Thanksgiving feast held at the Randolph Elementary School Nov. 17. The students were given the chance to make their own costumes and come to the lunch dressed as an American Indian or a Pilgrim to observe Thanksgiving in a living history reenactment. (Photo by Jennifer Valentin)

DAR honors top aviators

By Bob Hieronymus
Wingspread staff writer

Continuing a tradition that began in 1958, the Texas Society of the Daughters of the American Revolution honored the top Randolph instructor pilots and combat systems officers of the year Wednesday.

Lynn Forney Young, vice state regent of the society, presented the awards in four categories: instructor pilot, student instructor pilot, CSO instructor and CSO student.



Maj. Rusk
PIT Instructor



1st Lt. Milledge
PIT Student



Capt. Wallace
CSO Instructor



2nd Lt. Howard
CSO Student

Maj. Mark Rusk of the 560th Flying Training Squadron was named instructor pilot of the year. Other nominees included Maj. Charles Shumaker, 99th FTS, Maj.

Richard Bruce, 558th FTS, and Maj. Guy Schmidt, 559th FTS.

First Lt. Aaron Milledge, formerly

See **DAR** on page 6

Tree lighting set for Dec. 2

Everyone in the Randolph community is invited to attend the annual Holiday Tree Lighting Ceremony Dec. 2 at 5 p.m. in the center of Washington Circle in front of Building 100, the Taj Mahal.

In preparation for the ceremony, the circle will be closed Dec. 2 at 8 a.m.

The Randolph Elementary School choir performs at 5 p.m. and the tree will be lit at 5:45 p.m. by Col. Richard Clark, 12th Flying Training Wing vice commander, with a member of the choir.

After the tree is lit, attendees will sing carols to welcome Santa Claus. After Santa's entrance, children are invited to take a picture with Santa and enjoy refreshments in the Taj.

12th Flying Training Wing Training Status

Pilot Instructor Training <small>As of Tuesday</small>			Navigator, EWO Students				Wing Flying Hour Program					
			562nd FTS		563rd FTS		Aircraft	Required	Flown	Annual		
Squadron	Seniors	Overall	CSO/NFO		CSO		Graduate EWO		T-1A	1444.5	1502.9	10,725
99th FTS	-2.2	-1.2	USAF	260	OPS	45	International	0	T-6A	2161.6	2352.5	17,196
558th FTS	-11.3	-5.1	Navy	38	Advanced EW	26	EW Course	0	T-37B	715.8	726.5	5,796
559th FTS	-2.8	-3.4	International	0	Integration	11	Intro to EW	0	T-38C	1293.5	1359.3	9,937
560th FTS	-0.3	-0.6	Total in Training	298		82		0	T-43	562.6	563.5	3,982
Numbers reflect days ahead or behind for senior pilot instructor training class and an average for all PIT classes currently in training.			Numbers reflect students currently in training. The 562nd shows source of combat systems officer students. Air Force students include Air Force Reserve and Air National Guard. The 563rd indicates students in specific courses.						The required and flown numbers reflect hours flown between Oct. 1, 2005, to Tuesday. The annual numbers are total hours to be flown in fiscal year 2006.			

**AIR AND SPACE
EXPEDITIONARY
FORCE**

As of Monday, 72 Team Randolph members are deployed in support of military operations around the globe

“**PROTECT
YOUR
WINGMAN**”

DUI...
It's a crime
not a mistake

Team Randolph's
last DUI was
August 2, 2005



**Dedicated
June 20, 1930,
Randolph celebrates its
75th Anniversary in 2005**
Graphic by Michelle DeLeon

WINGSPREAD

**12th Flying Training Wing
Editorial Staff**

Col. John Hesterman
Commander
Capt. Paul Villagran
Chief of Public Affairs
Michael Briggs
Editor

**Prime Time Military Newspaper
Contract Staff**

Jennifer Valentin
Bob Hieronymus
Staff Writers
Maggie Armstrong
Graphic Designer

Wingspread office:

1 Washington Circle, Suite 4
Randolph AFB, Texas 78150
Phone: (210) 652-5760
Fax: (210) 652-5412

Wingspread Advertisements:
Prime Time Military Newspapers
7137 Military Drive West
San Antonio, Texas 78227
Phone: (210) 675-4500
Fax: (210) 675-4577

Wingspread online:

www.randolph.af.mil/12ftw/wing/pa/wingspread.htm

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Articles may also be sent by e-mail to wingspread@randolph.af.mil or by fax at 652-5412 or base ext. 7-5412.

For more information about submissions, call 652-5760 or base ext. 7-5760.

AF leaders send Thanksgiving message

By Michael Wynne
Secretary of the Air Force
and Gen. T. Michael Moseley
Air Force Chief of Staff

Thanksgiving is a special day for Americans to gather with family and friends and appreciate all our nation has to offer.

Whether fighting the Global War on Terror, providing disaster relief around the globe, or defending our country here at home, Airmen cannot always be with our families at this special time. However, the American people are truly thankful you are on the frontlines, defending our rights and freedoms.

Because of the skill, hard work, dedication, and sacrifice of our Airmen – active duty, Guard, Reserve and civilians all – America is safe.

For that service and dedication, we are thankful. We are thankful for each of you who serve, at home and abroad. We are thankful for the support your families give you – allowing you to make the U.S. Air Force the best in the world.

We're incredibly proud of you and your families.
Happy Thanksgiving!



Michael Wynne



Gen. T. Michael Moseley

“We are thankful for each of you who serve, at home and abroad. We are thankful for the support your families give you – allowing you to make the U.S. Air Force the best in the world.”

Thanksgiving: A family-first time

By John W. Hesterman
12th Flying Training Wing commander

Thanksgiving traditionally marks the beginning of the holiday season. This is a special time for each of us to gather with family and friends to reflect on the year that has passed and for all that we have been blessed with.

This is also an opportunity to rest and recover from what has been a very busy year for the 12th Flying Training Wing and Team Randolph. Thanks for all you have done.

Over this long weekend and throughout the holidays, I urge each of you to take time to be with your loved ones and enjoy a well-earned break.

Please ensure you take a moment to thank your family for the support they provide you while you serve this great nation. Our families should be our top priority this weekend and always.

As we venture out to be with those who are special to

“Over this long weekend and throughout the holidays, I urge each of you to take time to be with your loved ones and enjoy a well-earned break.”



us, I ask each of you to take a moment to remember those deployed who stand the line in support of liberty and democracy who cannot be with their families just now. Their sacrifices are preserving our freedoms and way of life.

Finally, please keep in mind how important it is to make good decisions and to avoid unnecessary risks. Simply put, come back safe and rested. Jenni, Sarah and I wish you a Happy Thanksgiving and a wonderful holiday season.

Give thanks, best is yet to come

By Chief Master Sgt. Alex Reyna
Air Education and Training Command



Certainly there are things wrong in America that must be corrected, but before we start complaining, let's put things into perspective and be thankful for what we have.

Try telling the poor people of the world things are getting so bad that it's difficult to have a two- or three-car family. Try telling them that life is becoming intolerable because our color television set costs too much to repair or work is too difficult because our e-mail system is down.

Instead of being thankful for what we have, we continue to criticize. Americans of earlier generations would wonder at the comforts and securities we take for granted today.

Americans are better off today than any other people in the history of the world, but everywhere you go you find discontent with all we have and mistrust of our institutions and their leaders.

Poverty in America, with few exceptions, has become a black and

white television set, a home with no computer and meat only twice a week. Pneumonia is treatable and summer is no longer a time when parents live in dread of polio striking their children.

We've gone to the moon, survived political assassinations, forced resignations and deadly attacks on our land.

We have improved wages so substantially that American workers can buy more goods for less work than any other workers in the history of the world. Yet, to hear the doomsayers describe our country, we are left to conclude that life in America is getting worse than it has ever been.

What is it that causes us to place such a small value on all we have that we more and more measure progress by how effectively we

dismantle or alter beyond recognition the institutions that have been so vital to our achievements?

It's time to bring some sense of intelligent balance to our self-judgments. Let's put an end to allowing relatively minor irritations to become so magnified that the heritage we leave to our children is only our sense of apathy and despair.

It's no longer enough to simply ignore our cynics, because cynicism, like optimism, feeds on itself. If we lose faith in ourselves and our country, we lose hope for tomorrow. Those without hope do not dream. Those who do not dream do not accomplish what needs to be done to make this a better life.

The best of America is yet to come if we believe in our own goodness and abilities to imagine what needs to be done and then do it. The best of America is yet to come if we agree with Thomas Wolfe. He said, "Our America is here, is now and beckons on before us, and that this glorious assurance is not only our living hope, but our dream to be accomplished."

Congratulations Retirees

Today

Chief Master Sgt. Michael O'Neill
Air Force Occupational Measurement Squadron

Retirement announcements should be submitted to the Wingspread office by noon Friday two weeks prior to the desired date of publication.
E-mail announcements to randolph.retiree.messages@randolph.af.mil or fax them to 652-5412. For more information, call the Wingspread office at 652-5760.

Finding new home, family in midst of hurricane losses

By 2nd Lt. Lisa Kostellic
81st Training Wing Public Affairs

KEESLER AIR FORCE BASE, Miss. (AETCNS) – There's no denying the progress Keesler has made to return to some kind of normalcy since Hurricane Katrina.

Still, I find myself torn between mourning the losses of so many others and mourning my own losses. The generous spirit in me wants to break out the checkbook every time I hear something on the radio about donations to "this Katrina fund" or "that Katrina fund." I have to remind myself that I am a victim, too. I'm starting over, too.

Losing almost everything really isn't such a bad thing for my husband and me. It means we get to buy new and better stuff. Of course, it's still just stuff, but this time it's insured stuff, and I can say with certainty we're lucky and thankful that our losses were few in comparison to so many others.

I was even more fortunate to be almost 1,000 miles away in training when Katrina came ashore. There was limited information on the state of the coast, and not knowing was a burden. However, like others in training with me, I knew graduating was a priority because Katrina didn't destroy the Air Force.

“Although there's a weight on my heart only time will be able to lift, I've come to a new realization. Not only do I get to establish a new home, I can see now I have a new family. I've been on active duty for only nine months, and I realize how truly lucky I am.”

However, Keesler isn't just my duty station, Biloxi has been my home since 1980. I went to kindergarten at Keesler, elementary school at Poppo Ferry, middle school at Fernwood, and proudly wore my red and white when I received my high school diploma in 1996. I'm a Biloxian.

I returned to duty Oct. 17 and for a while still hadn't ventured south of Keesler. I was afraid seeing the devastation would finally force me to accept that my memories, along with so many others' memories, were washed away.

My curiosity couldn't be contained long. After

talking to so many about what they lost and where they lived, I realized my childhood home had been in harm's way. I had to know. I had to see it. So I drove down Cedar Lake Road, past the new Biloxi High, right onto Brasher Road, left onto Mulberry Drive ... and now I know.

Now I know what so many others have felt since the day after the storm. The image of my childhood home is burned in my mind, and it's not just the gutted house with a dirty, empty pool I see, but my entire neighborhood. My neighbors' homes are in the same state, and all that's left of the home of my best friend from kindergarten is a slab. The streets where my brother and I used to ride our bikes until dusk are nearly deserted.

Although there's a weight on my heart only time will be able to lift, I've come to a new realization. Not only do I get to establish a new home, I can see now I have a new family. I've been on active duty for only nine months, and I realize how truly lucky I am.

The Air Force is not just my employer – it's my family. I was already proud to wear the Air Force uniform, but now I am proud to call the Air Force my family, and anywhere there's family, there's home.

Member gives thanks for service second time around

By Tech. Sgt. Michael Wagner
12th Security Forces Squadron

Thanksgiving is a time when we should take a moment to sit back and give thanks for the gifts we have received in our lives. It doesn't matter whether it's being grateful for blessings during the past year or events that have taken place throughout our lives.

We should put things in perspective in order to remember that our lives have been blessed with the love of friends and family and moderate successes of certain goals in our lives.

One thing I have been very grateful for nearly 25 years is the Air Force. I served as an active duty member from 1982 thru 1992 as an aerospace ground

equipment mechanic, then as an Air Force historian.

Since 1992, I've been a member of the Reserve with the 433rd Civil Engineer Squadron at Lackland Air Force Base.

I'm currently working as an augmentee gate entry controller with the 12th Security Forces Squadron here at Randolph.

I cannot tell you how great it feels to be on active duty. Besides great pay and benefits, I enjoy being on the gate for the most part. Yes, the hours are long, but I do have a lot of fun. Most people coming through the gate are very nice and have a great sense of humor. Most of us have a great rapport, as do the truck drivers who

come to the search pit at the south gate.

Also, I greatly enjoy the people I work with. There are a lot of good people on the gates. Although I'm a technical sergeant, I learn a lot from the airmen first class and senior airmen. They have a great amount of knowledge. Rank, of course, has its place, but it's the character of the people you work with that is really important. After all, we are a team, and so many of these younger people are the backbone of the gates and at so many other important jobs in the military.

I don't know how long this job will last. All I can say is, I'm very grateful and honored to be on active duty once

again. I'd like it to last quite a while longer, because I get a special feeling being in this group.

I guess it's like a baseball player who has gone from the major leagues to the minors and back to the majors again. There's a certain sweetness the second time around. You cherish it all the more and hope it continues.

Thanksgiving is personally my most sacred holiday. I have great memories of being with loved ones and the wonderful feasts we shared.

The Air Force and the many exceptional people in this great organization have been an integral part of my life for the past quarter century. I feel like I'm with family. For all the Air Force has done for me, I thank you.

News

'America Supports You' program observes first anniversary

By Donna Miles
American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON – One year ago this month, the Defense Department launched "America Supports You," a program to showcase the nation's support for its men and women in uniform and the many ways citizens are expressing that support.

Today, what began as a six-month campaign has snowballed into a full-fledged effort that's showing no signs of waning, said Allison Barber, deputy assistant secretary of defense for public affairs, who came up with the program concept and oversees its operations.

The words "America Supports You" are as likely to be uttered by President Bush and Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld as by corporate giants, sports figures, superstar entertainers, grassroots organizers and kindergarteners, Ms. Barber noted.

But even more importantly, she said, the word has reached U.S. servicemembers and their families.

"Thankfully, they've heard about the campaign and the support they have from the American people, and their families have too," she said.

This boosts morale and gives comfort to families whose loved ones are serving in harm's way, she said. It also gives a clear answer to questions Ms. Barber said she remembers hearing just a year ago that demonstrated the need for the program.

"We've heard troops in the field asking if Americans are still supporting them," she said at last year's kickoff

on Nov. 19. "And we were determined to be able to answer that question in a meaningful way."

No longer are troops left wondering about that support, Ms. Barber said on the program's first anniversary. The America people are answering that question in ways large and small, she said.

From the time President Bush heralded the program last December during a visit to Camp Pendleton, Calif., the program has continued to grow. Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld promotes it regularly during media interviews and public appearances and wears his official America Supports You pin nearly everywhere he goes.

Celebrities from nearly every walk of life have endorsed the program. Networks now produce and air their own America Supports You public service announcements. And the program has been featured prominently at major sporting events, including Monday Night Football, the Country Music Awards and other national spotlights.



In addition, 18 corporate partners and 175 grassroots organizations have joined the America Supports You team through the program's Web site, and their numbers continue to grow, Barber said.

The America Supports You Web site has become a key focus of the program, providing a forum for groups and individuals to officially join the ASY team, share information about their efforts, seek volunteers and donations, and explore new ways to show support. It also provides a direct channel for people to personally thank the troops for their contributions.

More than 1.3 million people have visited the site during the past year, viewing almost 5 million pages, according to officials who maintain the site. Daily visits to the site now average from 3,000 to 3,500, spiking when the America Supports You program is highlighted in a speech or during a concert, sporting event or other activity.

In addition, visitors have sent almost 151,000 messages to the troops through the site, expressing thanks and concern, offering pats on the back and sending prayers.

"It has energized people and encouraged organizations to start doing more for our military members and their families," Barber said.

She said she's amazed by the outpouring from all corners and optimistic that it will continue.

"The Defense Department is truly grateful to the American people who have demonstrated their support for the troops," Barber said.

Spreading goodwill



Senior Airman Jana Sautter, 568th Expeditionary Security Forces Squadron and deployed from the 12th Security Forces Squadron at Randolph, hands out candy to Iraqi children during a humanitarian relief mission Nov. 14 in Umm Qasr, Iraq. More than 40 people from the 568th and 886th ESF Squadrons participated and provided more than 300 boxes of candy and supplies. (Photo by Capt. Michael Johnson, 386th Air Expeditionary Wing)

Force Shaping briefing set for Monday

By Armando Perez
12th Flying Training Wing Public Affairs

Randolph officers in the 2002 and 2003 year groups will have the chance to hear first hand about the Force Shaping program that will begin next year when an Air Force team conducts a "Spread the Word" briefing here next week.

The briefing takes place Monday at 2 p.m. in the base theater and will include information about how the Air Force hopes to sustain a balanced force while providing the opportunity for officers to advance within their respective career fields, officials said.

The Air Force recently approved the development of the annual Force Shaping Board to evaluate officers for continued service at their three-year point as part of the service's force management program.

The first Force Shaping Board is scheduled to convene at the Air Force Personnel Center here April 3. The board will evaluate active duty line officers in the 2002 and 2003 accession year groups except those officers who have less than two years current active service or 15 or more years of active service as of Sept. 29, 2006.

The board's objective is to shape the force by retaining officers to develop as future leaders. The board will make its determination based on the information in the officers' central section records and Retention Recommendation Forms.

The briefing Monday will also cover voluntary separation programs and cross-training opportunities.

"Randolph has about 241 junior officers in the 2002 and 2003 year groups and 58 are currently vulnerable and could be affected during the board's intervention now and

until September of next year," said Lt. Col. Matt Crabbe, deputy chief of the assignments division in the Air Education and Training Command Directorate of Personnel who is organizing the briefings. "The Force Shaping Program will not only reduce the number of officers but will reshape the force by allowing eligible officers to cross-train into career fields that are in need of qualified officers."

In fiscal year 2005, the Air Force's voluntary force shaping initiatives successfully reduced the size of the active duty population to its congressionally authorized level of 359,700. However, the fiscal 2006 budget trims the Air Force down to 357,400 Airmen. The new population target shows the Air Force will have an overage of officers.

As of October, a little more than 1,700 officers were eligible for separation from the Air Force under the Force Shaping Program. As of Nov. 19, the number has dropped to 1,455 due to those who have volunteered to separate.

Air Force leaders had hoped to reduce the officer corps through the voluntary Force Shaping Program. The program offers interested officers separation programs that may also include a waiver for recouping education costs.

The preferred separation avenue is the Palace Chase program because it gives officers the chance to serve the Force within their own community or to serve closer to home as members of the Guard or Reserve, Lt. Col. Crabbe said.

He cautioned those eligible for the Force Shaping Board to not wait until late September next year, as they will not have the opportunity to cross-train into another career field of their choice and must choose among the four voluntary separation program options.

Volunteers sought for tax filing assistance

By Bob Hieronymus
Wingspread staff writer

Last year volunteers on Randolph assisting in income tax preparation saved people more than \$330,000 in preparation fees and secured more than \$2.7 million in tax refunds.

The 12th Flying Training Wing is looking for volunteers to do that much and more for military members and their families in 2006, said 1st Lt. Brian Young, 12th FTW assistant judge advocate.

The Volunteer Income Tax Assistance Program is run in conjunction with the Internal

Revenue Service and is supervised by specialists from the base legal office. People eligible for legal assistance are eligible to use the VITA program for filing their tax returns, he said.

"Volunteers may be active duty or retired members or their dependents," said Chris Hull, 12th JA legal specialist. "A four-day training class will be conducted by the IRS Dec. 19 to 22, and an optional one-day class about the TaxWise filing software will be conducted Jan. 5, 9 or 11. There is no charge for this training."

During the tax filing season from

January through April, the trained volunteers will be able to set their own schedules for clients and operate from any Randolph computer hooked up to the local area network. Because this work may be done during duty hours, unit commanders must give permission for the volunteers to apply.

Family members who volunteer can schedule time on one of the workstations in the base legal office to work with their clients, Ms. Hull said.

For information about the VITA program or to volunteer, call Ms. Hull at 652-6781.

NEWS BRIEFS

MSS, LGR offices closed

The 12th Mission Support Squadron customer service and ID Section will be closed Dec. 1 in order to complete system upgrades.

The 12th Logistics Readiness Division vehicle operations element will be closed for the holidays on the following dates: Nov 24, Dec. 24-26, and Dec 31 through Jan. 2.

Previously arranged transportation and emergency mission requirements will be supported. To leave a message during closed hours, call 652-3477 or 652-6609.

For emergency transportation, call the wing command center at 652-1859.

Randolph Ambassador duty

The deadline is Monday to apply to be a Randolph Ambassador for 2006.

Ambassadors, one man and one woman, serve as representatives of the base to community events and functions throughout the year.

The competition is open to all Randolph full-time employees, military and civilian, who are at least 21 years of age. Application forms are available in the wing public affairs office in the west basement of Building 100.

Commissary scholarships

Application forms are available at the commissary for the Scholarships for Military Children program. The program is open to unmarried children of active duty, Reserve, Guard and retired military members under the age of 21 or under 23 if already enrolled in school.

At least one \$1,500 scholarship will be awarded at every commissary location.

The applicant must be planning to attend or already be attending an accredited college or university full time during the fall 2006 term or enrolled in a program of studies designed to transfer into a four-year program.

Applications must be submitted in person at a base commissary by close of business Feb. 22.

Forms and more information are available at www.militaryscholar.org or at commissaries.com.

AFAS education grants

The Randolph Family support Center has application forms available for the General Henry H. Arnold Education Grant Program of the Air Force Aid Society. Last year Team Randolph people received \$100,500 in grants.

Spouses and dependent children of active duty and most Reserve members may apply. All categories must be on active duty through Dec. 1, 2006. Dependent children of retired members and of members deceased while on active duty or retired are also eligible.

Application forms are also available on the Web at afas.org.

Top CDC performers

The following people recently scored 90 percent or higher on their Career Development Course end-of-course examinations: Airman 1st Class Arthur Hyzer, 12th Medical Group, Staff Sgt. Allen Mendiola, 12th MDG, Airman 1st Class Lionel Garcia, 12th Mission Support Group, Senior Airman Tyler Trease, 12th MSG, Senior Airman Ivan Leal, 12th MSG, Airman 1st Class David Chessmore, 12th MSG, Staff Sgt. Christine Collins, 12th Operations Group, Senior Airman Robert Belus, 12th Comptroller Squadron, and Staff Sgt. Eric Mixon, Air Education and Training Command Computer Systems Squadron.

Back in business

Keesler gets large influx of students, lodging an issue

By Susan Griggs
81st Training Wing Public Affairs

KEESLER AIR FORCE BASE, Miss. (AETCNS) – A caravan of buses wound its way to Keesler Oct. 31, a sure sign that the 81st Training Group is rebounding from Hurricane Katrina. The arrival of the 314 basic training graduates for in-processing at the Levitow Training Support Facility was the largest "shipment" of students Keesler has seen in at least two years, not just since the storm, said Lt. Col. Shane Courville, 81st TRG deputy commander.

The nonprior service student load topped 1,700 as of Nov. 1, about 200 more than immediately before Katrina, along with about 150 Marine Corps and Navy students. Preparations for another 1,200 active-duty, Air National Guard and Reserve students are under way to accommodate students in temporary duty status.

Colonel Courville, who commanded the 81st Training Support Squadron before moving to the 81st TRG command section, recalled that immediately after the hurricane, officials expected Keesler's training mission to be suspended until March 2006. But by Sept. 19, 400 students were back in the base's classrooms, and the number has risen steadily ever since. He credits Keesler's long-term facility modernization program with the resurgence of technical training.

"Even though our dormitories and training facilities are on the south side of the base nearer the coastline, most of the structures are new and well-built and survived the winds and flooding quite well," Colonel Courville said.

Col. Deborah Van De Ven, who assumed command of the 81st TRG Sept. 30, said that a tiger team comprised of representatives from Air Staff, the Air Force Personnel Center, Air Education and Training Command, 2nd Air Force and all technical training bases is guiding the reconstitution of Keesler's training mission. As of Nov. 1, 27 enlisted initial skills courses prioritized by Air Staff in Hurricane Katrina's aftermath have resumed.

"Sometimes I have to slow things down a little – the need for training is growing faster than I can ensure capabilities," Colonel Van De Ven said. "We have seven long courses that require (permanent change of station) moves, and we have some issues to work with married students who have dependents to care for, because of the critical housing shortages here since the storm."

Before Katrina, Keesler had more TDY students than nonprior service trainees. Lodging is still a limiting factor in the resumption of specialized follow-on training.

"Beds are an issue," Colonel Van De Ven said. "We need greater resolution of our requirements to work with the 81st



Airman Basic Dustin Walls from Milton, Pa., retrieves his bag after arriving at Keesler AFB Oct. 31 following a bus trip from Lackland Air Force Base, Texas. He's assigned to the 332nd Training Squadron. (Photo by Herb Welch)

Mission Support Group on the billeting situation. Before Katrina, many of our TDY students stayed downtown, but now the off-base situation isn't particularly good."

Nov. 1, the training group turned over one of the newer dormitories, Connor Manor, for TDY student lodging.

"It won't be an ideal situation with two to a room, but it's the best we can do under the circumstances to get the training machine back towards full production," Colonel Van De Ven said.

Repairs are already under way for

three 81st TRG buildings that sustained extensive roof damage.

Colonel Van De Ven is proud of the way Keesler trainers have coped in the hurricane's aftermath.

"It's amazing the way our instructors have been able to set aside their personal losses to get the job done," she said. "It seems as if half of our people lost everything and the other half had minimal losses. There's tremendous camaraderie here – everyone pulling together to take care of our mission as well as each other."

Online process simplifies tuition assistance

By Staff Sgt. Julie Weckerlein
Air Force Print News

WASHINGTON (AFPN) – Airmen are only a few mouse clicks away from financial support for their college education, thanks to the tuition assistance feature on the Air Force's virtual education center.

Online since early 2003, the center helps active-duty, Guard and reserve Airmen pursue their off-duty education from a computer.

"It's a continual process to make [the site] a one-stop shop for an Airman's educational needs," said Kendall McAree, the Air Force's education systems manager at the Pentagon. "We're very excited to be able to now make tuition assistance available online."

Air Force tuition assistance is a quality of life program that provides tuition assistance and fees for college courses taken by active duty Airmen during off-duty hours. It's capped at \$250 per semester hour – \$166 per quarter hour – and is one of the most frequent reasons Airmen give for enlisting and

Air Force tuition assistance is a quality of life program that provides tuition assistance and fees for college courses taken by active duty Airmen during off-duty hours. ...and is one of the most frequent reasons Airmen give for enlisting and reenlisting in the Air Force

reenlisting in the Air Force, according to the Web site.

Now that all application paperwork is online, Mrs. McAree hopes more Airmen will take advantage of the program.

"Airmen can now access the information anywhere at any time, whether they are at home or deployed somewhere," she said. "With the online

signature, all the paperwork can be routed through the appropriate channels faster and more efficiently."

That means Airmen do not visit an education center, which is good, "because some Airmen are in places where there are no education centers," she said.

Mrs. McAree said the new online capability also frees up education center workers, who spent a lot of time doing the paperwork involved with tuition assistance. Now they can devote more time to face-to-face counseling and assisting customers, she said.

Along with tuition assistance, Airmen can use the Web site to check their Community College of the Air Force progress, request transcript and civilian course conversion tables, distance learning information, DANTES and CLEP test results and more.

The Air Force Virtual Education Center link is available through the Air Force Portal at www.my.af.mil.

Well maintained lawns keep base beautiful in fall

By Jennifer Valentin
Wingspread staff writer

With fall here, some housing residents may not feel the need to keep their lawns in top shape since summer has passed.

However, no matter what the season or weather conditions, lawns need to be cared for all year round, according to base officials.

"Caring for your lawn not only helps keep the housing area beautiful, but it helps keep the rest of the earth clean too," said Kent Rohlof, water programs manager. "Having a well-cared lawn should be a top priority for housing residents."

Housing residents are asked to mulch grass clippings, leaves and branches into their lawns using a mulching mower, added Matt Kramm, natural resources manager. This provides natural fertilizer

back into the lawn and improves the soil quality. "Keeping leaves to a minimum in the yard helps reduce moisture and humidity," Mr. Kramm said. "A mulching mower is the best method for reducing leaves in the yard."

Residents can also dispose of their grass clippings, leaves and branches in commercially available plastic lawn bags placed on the curb in their front yard for pick-up every Monday. The grounds maintenance contractor picks up the bagged material and takes it to a local composting facility, Mr. Kramm said.

Not enough sunlight reaches the grass when leaves hide it, so it is a good idea to keep as many leaves off the lawn as possible, according to the Earth Share Web site.

Beyond the benefits to the lawn, mulching and bagging leaves keeps them from going down storm drains, adding to the effort to keep streams and rivers

clean and thriving, Mr. Rohlof said. Not only is it beneficial to keep a lot leaves off of the lawn, but it is also beneficial to keep grass at the right height, Mr. Kramm added.

"Cutting your grass regularly at the appropriate height, depending on the species of grass, helps reduce weeds and promotes a healthy and desirable landscape," Mr. Kramm said.

When watering, soak the grass through to the roots and not just the top of the blades. Some types of grass need more water than other types of grass, according to Earth Share.

"Residents should follow these simple guidelines when caring for their lawns," Mr. Rohlof said. "The end result will be a well-cared for lawn, and doing right by the environment."

For more information, call 652-4668 or visit www.earthshare.org.

An ouch of prevention



Chief Master Sgt. Rodney Ellison, Air Education and Training Command command chief master sergeant, gets his annual flu shot outside the AETC headquarters conference room Tuesday from Tech. Sgt. Tammy Freeman of the 12th Medical Group. The base immunization clinic began conducting flu shot clinics this week for military members and civilian employees. Future clinics take place Tuesday in the Air Force Personnel Center Conference Room, Dec. 2 and 9 in the theater, and Dec. 6 in Building 905. (Photo by Joel Martinez)

Air Force updates PT uniform guidance

The Air Force Uniform Board established an Oct. 1, 2006 mandatory wear date for unit fitness activities and released additional guidance for Airmen wearing the physical training uniform for personal workouts.

Airmen may wear the PTU during personal workouts given the following conditions:

- T-shirts may be worn out or tucked in;
- jackets may be zipped, unzipped and worn with civilian clothes;
- black or navy blue leggings or stretch shorts may be worn under the uniform shorts;
- white socks of any length and small conservative trademarks are authorized;
- any athletic shoes may be worn;
- safety items such as reflective belts, camelbacks and fannypacks are authorized;
- hats or knit caps are authorized provided they meet military image requirements;
- headphones are still authorized;
- bandanas and other similar head scarves

are not authorized unless Airmen have a medical waiver; and

- saluting is not required.

All Airmen must comply with tattoo and jewelry standards as stated in Air Force Instruction 36-2903 "Dress and Personal Appearance of Air Force Personnel."

Female Airmen exercising in the PTU may wear their hair free of pins or other accessories normally required to meet uniform standards. Also, there is no mandated maternity PTU while participating in formations or unit activities.

The PTU was created to support unit cohesion and present a professional, standardized image. Commanders will determine what uniform items, which consist of a jacket, pants, shorts and T-shirt, Airmen will wear during unit fitness events.

The uniform board is working on optional items including a long-sleeve shirt, sweatshirt and another style of running shorts.

DAR

Continued from Page 1

of the 560th FTS and now assigned to the 50th FTS at Columbus Air Force Base, Miss., was named student instructor pilot of the year. The other nominee in that category was Capt. Steven Shearin, 99th FTS.

The CSO instructor of the year for 2005 is Capt. John Wallace, 563rd FTS.

Second Lt. Peter Howard won the student CSO of the year award. Lieutenant Howard graduated in June from the training program at the 563rd FTS and is now stationed at Kirtland AFB, N.M.

Candidates for the awards are nominated by their squadron commanders and the list was submitted to the DAR for final selection.

"The DAR has a well-earned reputation for

patriotic service and we are pleased that they have chosen this tradition to honor our instructors," said Col. John Newell, 12th Operations Group commander, before announcing the recipients. "The difficult part is choosing the winners from among a group who together represent the best in the Air Force at what they do."

The DAR was founded in 1890 to promote patriotism, preserve American history and secure America's future through better education for children.

The society, which includes 170,000 members in more than 2,000 chapters in the United States and 11 foreign countries, awards more than \$150,000 in scholarships.

Colonel's bone marrow helps saves baby girl's life

By Capt. Ryan Norman
572nd Global Mobility Squadron

TRAVIS AIR FORCE BASE, Calif. (AFPN) – More than a decade ago, then Capt. Marilyn Kott spent a few extra minutes at the end of a mobility processing line to learn about a program that matches Air Force volunteers with persons who need bone marrow transplants.

Three assignments went by and her life went on as usual. Then one day this summer she received a phone call informing her that she was a possible match for 4-month-old baby that needed a bone marrow transplant.

"I almost forgot I had even signed up for the program," said Lt. Col. Marilyn Kott, the 572nd Global Mobility Readiness Squadron commander.

A representative from the C.W. Bill Young Donor Center in Kensington, Md., guided Colonel Kott through the long process to determine if she was an ideal match.

The Department of Defense donor center supports active-duty military members and their families, department civilians, reservists, Guard and Coast Guard members eligible to donate.

Participation in the program, which is 100 percent voluntary, does not obligate a person to donate. Volunteer can back out at any time.

Colonel Kott did not back out. She began the next process of the donor program – undergoing a telephone interview regarding her health and physical well being. She also provided updated blood samples, drawn at the David Grant U.S. Air Force Medical

"When they told me I was the best match, there was no doubt that I would donate. The fact the recipient was a baby made it more poignant."

Lt. Col. Marilyn Kott
572nd Global Mobility Readiness Squadron
commander

Center here and forwarded to the Georgetown University Hospital in Washington, D.C.

"I provided the blood sample, but I still did not really think that I would be a match for someone," the colonel said.

She was wrong. A month later she found she was the best match for a 4-month old baby with leukemia. This is a disease of the bone marrow in which unrestrained proliferation of white blood cells occurs, usually accompanied by anemia, impaired blood clotting and enlargement of the lymph nodes, liver and spleen.

"When they told me I was the best match, there was no doubt that I would donate," Colonel Kott said. "The fact the recipient was a baby made it more poignant."

In the weeks before the procedure, the baby received chemotherapy treatments to stop the progress of the cancer. The treatments destroy bone marrow,

which produces red blood cells.

Colonel Kott entered Georgetown University Hospital on the morning of Sept. 29 to take the final step. The procedure is relatively simple, only taking about an hour. The donor receives a general anesthesia and the marrow is drawn from the lower back.

After the procedure, Colonel Kott spent time in the recovery room while the anesthesia wore off and then rested overnight in the hospital.

"The people at the hospital at Georgetown treat you so well that it's easy to think the procedure is about you and not the recipient," Colonel Kott said. "While there was some discomfort, the procedure and recovery were really more of an inconvenience than anything else."

But the opportunity to meet the recipient will have to wait. According to donor program policy, Colonel Kott and the recipient cannot request to know who was on the other side of the procedure until one year passes.

"I'm glad to have been able to participate and would absolutely do it again," the colonel said. "Bone marrow is one of the body's organs with amazing life-saving properties, and yet it's very easy to donate. Really, it's just a little bone marrow to the donor, but it may be life altering for the patient."

The baby received the marrow within a few days of Colonel Kott's procedure. It's been five weeks and so far the news is good – the baby's health is progressing well.

For more information on the bone marrow program, call toll free 800-627-7693 or visit www.dodmarrow.org.

Pep squad takes second in state

By Jennifer Valentin
Wingspread staff writer

The Randolph Renegades Senior Pep Squad took second place recently at the Texas Youth Football Association State Cheerleading Competition held in Austin.

The youth center group is made up of 10- to 15-year-old girls.

The girls competed against 40 other squads in the competition.

"They all did a great job," said Christine Fussell, youth center assistant director. "Our senior team stood victorious under pressure and received the second place trophy."

The cheerleading squads are directed by Sherry Williams with help from cheerleading coach Jennifer Anderson and assistant coach Kim McCory.

"Our pep squads are a major morale booster for our football team, and they provide spirit to build up the spectators' enthusiasm," Ms. Fussell said. "The program inspires self-confidence and builds self-esteem."

The participants of the senior cheerleading squad are Angelina Perez, Jennifer Axberg, Meagan Branguard, Deja Williams, Jakyra McKinney, Haley Woods, Ashely Machen, Ashley Jones, Stephanie Harris, Natashaia Harris, Darian Haynes, Kayla Robinson, Kim Lally, Jessica Escobedo and Ruby Luna. All



The Randolph Renegades Senior Pep Squad took second place at the Texas Youth Football Association Cheerleading Competition held in Austin recently. The 10- to 15-year-old girls competed against 40 teams. (Courtesy photo)

received silver medals.

Deja said she especially enjoyed the time in Austin.

"The whole cheerleading experience was fun," Deja said. "But going to the TYFA competition was exciting,

because there were so many teams to see. Then when we won second place, we jumped and cheered. It was great!"

Dining out: Simple planning can make it healthy

By Jennifer Valentin
Wingspread staff writer

Most people are so busy juggling their work and family that finding time to make meals isn't in the cards.

This usually leads to a quick fix or picking up something easy, which may mean eating something that isn't very healthy.

However, there are alternatives that can be fast and healthy options for daily meals.

When picking up something for dinner from the grocery store, many stores now offer prepared entrees. Items such as salads, fresh or cooked vegetables, bread and fruit are easy to pick up and easier to serve, according to the American Heart Association.

"Cooking at home is a good way to control what is eaten," said Kim Houk, Health and Wellness Center exercise physiologist. "It allows you to know what is going into your food, and it allows you to control the cooking method, seasoning, and quantity served. It will also be less expensive if you bring something home to cook it yourself."

When dining out, people can call ahead or look over the menu before choosing to eat at a particular restaurant, according to the AHA.

"Some restaurants will take special requests, and you shouldn't be shy about asking," Ms. Houk said.

Many restaurants offer low-fat and low-cholesterol

meals, and eating less fat and less cholesterol is important for good health, according to the AHA. Diets high in saturated fat can raise blood cholesterol, which is a risk factor for heart attacks and strokes.

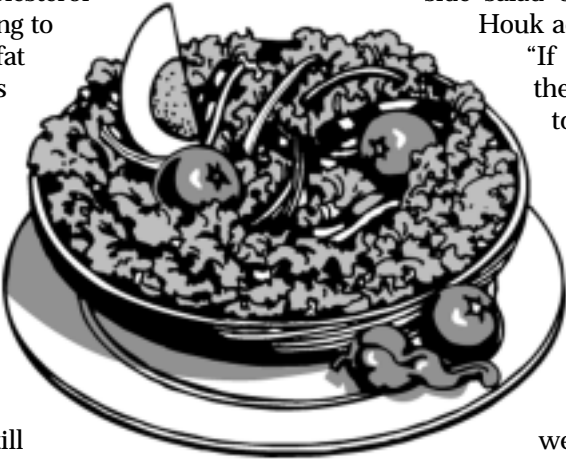
Foods that are high in fat include foods that are fried, basted, stewed or stuffed. Foods high in sodium include foods that are pickled, smoked or in soy or teriyaki sauce.

Even if meals low in saturated fat and cholesterol aren't on the restaurant's menu, customers may still be able to get a healthier meal by asking for food prepared to order, according to the AHA.

Diners can get margarine instead of butter with the meal, and can ask for the butter, gravy or sauce to be left off of the meal and for salad dressing to be served on the side. Food can be prepared without salt and with a vegetable oil or margarine made with vegetable oil.

"Avoid sauces or sides if possible, such as cheese sauces or cream gravy," Ms. Houk said. "If dressings and sauces are served on the side, you can control how much of it you eat."

If eating at a fast food restaurant, people can often substitute something healthier for fries, such as fruit, a



side salad or even baked chips, Ms. Houk added.

"If a salad bar is available at the restaurant you are going to, have a good portion of salad but without the high calorie and high fat toppings," Ms. Houk said. "It will fill you up, and you won't have the chance to overeat when the entree comes."

Breakfast menus are well known for including high-fat items such as bacon and

sausage. A healthy breakfast is a possibility, however, by including or just having certain foods such as fresh fruit, fruit juice, toast with jam, lean ham, oatmeal or low-fat yogurt.

Desserts can be ordered and split with friends, and food that is leftover can be taken home.

The HAWC offers its "Nutrition in the Fast Lane" booklet as a guide to nutrition for fast food and casual dining, Ms. Houk said. The booklet is useful for finding out nutrition information for different food available at different types of restaurants.

For more information, visit www.americanheart.org or call the HAWC at 652-2300.

Volunteers recognized

The 12th Flying Training Wing recognizes the following people for their volunteer support of the base community relations program by serving as tour escorts and speakers.

Joseph Harrison, 1st Manpower Requirement Squadron; Master Sgt. Roy Bowser, Air Education and Training Command; Staff Sgt. LaSonja Cavness, 12th Operations Support Squadron; Senior Airman William Clemens, 12th Aeromedical-Dental Squadron; Tech. Sgt. Jeff Womack, AETC; Master Sgt. Richard Davis, Air Force Recruiting Service; and Col. Robert Winiacki, AETC.

For more information on the speaker or tour escort program or to volunteer, call 652-4407.



Doug Ouellette sorts mail into bags that will be shipped directly to any of the 51 Air Force bases with which Randolph units have frequent contact. (Photos by Bob Hieronymus)

Special delivery

BITC staff handles large volumes of mail with care

By Bob Hieronymus
Wingspread staff writer

More than 3.5 million pieces of official mail come and go on Randolph each year and every piece is handled through the base mail room by a staff of just seven people.

The 12th Communications Squadron's Information Services Flight is responsible for many things on base, and its Base Information Transfer Center is the focal point for all that official mail and the personal mail for dormitory residents.

Michael Cantu, official mail manager, said the truck with BITC written on the side may be the most visible part of the organization to people on Randolph, but the work his people do affects everyone on a daily basis.

"If you see the BITC van turning corners carefully, it's because one of the people inside is sorting intra-base mail as they go from stop to stop," he said. "That makes it possible to have

same-day delivery on base."

One of the less-known tasks performed by the mail room staff is checking for threat substances in the mail.

"We use a state-of-the-art scanner to determine if traces of certain chemicals are in or on the mail," Mr. Cantu said. "When we get a hit with the scanner, we do a thorough scan until we find the item that triggered the scanner and start the threat investigation process."

Another service the mail room staff performs is document security.

Official mail that is sent or received in express, certified, insured or registered categories require special handling. Some of this may even include military classified material, so it always receives extra care, Mr. Cantu said.

His staff is also responsible for destruction of classified material.

Mr. Cantu pointed out that there are also two other agencies that handle mail-related items on

base. One is the base Traffic Management Office of the 12th Logistics Readiness Division, which is the focal point for items sent by courier, FedEx or UPS. The other is the United States Postal Service, which handles mail not destined for official channel distribution.

Outgoing official mail is normally deposited in and picked up from any of the 100 unit distribution offices around the base. Postage is then applied at the BITC for all mail to include private couriers, FedEx and UPS.

Mr. Cantu said the BITC staff searches for the highest level of service at the lowest possible rate prior to charging unit accounts.

Official mail should not be sent through USPS postal channels, Mr. Cantu said, without first being metered by the BITC staff.

"This will be even more important after the USPS rates go up in January," he added.

For more information about the military mail system, call the BITC at 652-3768.

Holiday Mailing Deadlines set

WASHINGTON (AFPN) -- The Department of Defense announced the recommended mailing dates to ensure that holiday cards and packages for service members arrive overseas in time for the holiday season.

Suggested dates are:

- ✉ Parcel post: Nov. 12
- ✉ Space-available mail: Nov. 26
- ✉ Parcel airlift mail: Dec. 3
- ✉ Priority and first-class letters/cards: Dec. 10
(Dec. 5 for APO 093)
- ✉ Express Mail military service: Dec. 19
(Not applicable for APO 093)

The Defense Department requests people who send mail to use the service member's full name, with or without rank or rating; unit and APO/FPO, Air/Army Post Office or Fleet Post Office; address with the nine-digit ZIP code, if one is assigned; and a return address. For packages, mailers are asked to print on one side only with the recipient's address in the lower right portion.

Packages must not be mailed in boxes that have markings related to any type of hazardous material, such as bleach, alcohol or cleaning fluids. Parcels found by the U.S. Postal Service with such markings will not be processed. Instead, they will be handled as non-mailable matter.





Giving Thanks

Base celebrates Thanksgiving with variety of events

By Jennifer Valentin
Wingspread staff writer

Randolph is celebrating Thanksgiving with something for everyone. There will be several meals served during the day for families and Airmen alike. The officers' club hosts a Thanksgiving meal Thursday with seven seating times available. The times are 11 a.m., 11:30 a.m., 12:30 p.m., 1:30 p.m., 2 p.m., 2:30 p.m. and 3 p.m. Reservations can be made until the seating times are sold out. Reservations must be pre-paid, and refunds will not be given within 48 hours of the event. For more information or to sign up for a seating time, call the club at 652-7445 or 652-4864.

The enlisted club offers a Thanksgiving meal as well on Thursday. The seating times are noon and 2:15 p.m. Reservations can be made until the seating times are sold out. For more information or to sign up for a seating time, call the club at 652-3056. "The clubs are offering great meals for the holiday at a reasonable price," said Shelta Reese, 12th Services Division marketing director. "The meals are a good way to enjoy being with the family without having to worry about cooking or cleaning up." The Rendevous Dining Facility offers meals for all those authorized to eat at the dining facility, including active duty members, retirees and family members. A light breakfast is served Thursday from 7-8 a.m., followed by a Thanksgiving meal served from 11

a.m. to 5 p.m. No reservations are needed. For more information, call 652-5533. "The meal will be served by commanders, first sergeants and chief's group members," said Frank Anderson, food service officer. "Everyone should take advantage of this meal." The bowling center is also setting up its pins and shining its shoes for those who want to exercise a bit after eating a hearty meal. The center is open Thanksgiving Day from 1-9 p.m. Games and shoe rentals cost \$1.50 per person. "The bowling center is a great way for the family to spend some time together while working off some of the calories," Ms. Reese said. For more details, call the center at 652-6271.

Tasty bird or nasty burn? Officials urge people to be cautious when using turkey fyers this holiday

By Daniel Vandergriff
Randolph Fire and Emergency Services

A longtime food favorite, the deep-fried turkey, is about to appear on tables this holiday season. While some people rave about this tasty creation, Underwriters Laboratories Inc. safety experts are concerned that backyard chefs may be sacrificing safety for good taste. A rash of reported fires has prompted UL to perform tests on turkey fryers. Based on their findings, the fryers used to produce those great-tasting birds may not be worth the risks. As a result, UL has decided not to certify any turkey fryers.

Here's why using a deep-fryer can be dangerous:

- Many units easily tip over, spilling up to five gallons of hot oil.
- If overfilled, the oil may spill out of the unit when the turkey is placed into the cooking pot. Oil may hit the burner causing a fire to engulf the entire unit.
- Partially frozen turkeys placed into the fryer can cause a spillover effect, resulting in a fire.
- With no thermostat controls, the units also have the potential to overheat the oil to the point of combustion.
- The sides of the cooking pot, lid and pot handles get dangerously hot, posing severe burn hazards.

When using a turkey fryer, follow these safety tips:

- Turkey fryers should always be used outdoors, a safe distance from buildings and any other material that can burn.
- Never use on wooden decks or in garages.
- Place fryers on a sturdy, flat surface to reduce accidental tipping.
- Never leave the fryer unattended. Most fryers don't have thermostat controls. If they aren't watched carefully, the oil will continue to heat until it catches fire.
- Never let children or pets near the fryer when in use.
- Don't overfill the fryer.
- Use well-insulated potholders or oven mitts when touching the pot or lid handles. Wear safety goggles to protect your eyes from oil splatter.
- Ensure the turkey is completely thawed and be careful with marinades. Oil and water don't mix.

The National Turkey Federation recommends refrigerator thawing and to allow approximately 24 hours for every five pounds of turkey thawed in the refrigerator. Keep an ABC fire extinguisher nearby. Never use water to extinguish a grease fire. Remember to use the best judgment when attempting to fight a fire. For more information about holiday fire safety, call the fire department at 652-6915. We're here to help.

Talkin' Turkey

Randolph Elementary School third-graders provide answers to Thanksgiving questions



Andrew Cribb

If you could invite anyone in the world to Thanksgiving dinner, who would it be?

"Kevin Garnett"



Skylar Moore

What are you most thankful for?

"My friends."



Grace Erwin

If you could invite anyone in the world to Thanksgiving dinner, who would it be?

"My pre-school teacher."



Malik Perez

What are you most thankful for?

"My baby sister."



Brock Gonzales

What would you want for Thanksgiving dinner instead of turkey?

"Candy covered in chocolate."



Noah Torrey

Why do we eat Turkey on Thanksgiving?

"Because there weren't any chickens around when the pilgrims had Thanksgiving."



Jasmine Mills

What would you want for Thanksgiving dinner instead of turkey?

"Tacos, macaroni and cheese and lasagna."



Rebecca White

What about Thanksgiving do you like more than Christmas?

"Being with friends and family and telling them what you're thankful for."

Drop in degrees shouldn't lead to drop in exercise

By Jennifer Valentin
Wingspread staff writer

With the winter season on its way, exercise routines may start to stray. While colder temperatures may keep some people exercising indoors, or even keep them from not exercising altogether, there are some advantages and tips that can be followed for exercising outside. According to the American Medical Athletic Association, some people think they may freeze their lungs is they exercise in the cold weather. However, as freezing air makes its way through the body and to the lungs, the body actually warms it up, so there is no scientific evidence showing that a person can freeze their lungs. "However, it can be more comfortable for people if they wear a scarf over their mouth and nose if they decide to exercise in the cold weather," said Kim Houk, exercise physiologist. "This is also a great way to help warm inhaled air, and make breathing easier. It is also helpful for people who tend to get exercise-induced asthma." Many base members exercise in the early morning hours before their work day begins, which is when the temperatures are coldest and the

sunlight isn't out yet. "If a person exercises in the darker hours of the morning, they should remember to be safe and avoid high-traffic areas and wear bright colors or reflective tape so they can be seen easily by other people and by motorists," Ms. Houk said. "People should be on the defensive around slick areas, and cars, maintaining eye contact with drivers." People may think if they sweat less in the cold, they are not getting as good of a workout. According to the association, it actually takes a little more energy to exercise in cold weather than it does in warm weather. Taking this into consideration, winter is a good time for people to build a running routine or try a new outdoor sport. When exercising, Ms. Houk recommends that people start going into the wind, so they will have the wind behind them on the way back. When dressing for outdoor exercise in colder weather, layers are the most important part of the wardrobe. The innermost layer should be made of a synthetic material that will not keep moisture close to the skin. Cotton would be a bad example, since it keeps moisture next to the skin, keeping it wetter and colder. The middle layer should be

similar to Polar Fleece, with the thickness depending on the outdoor temperature. The outer layer should be appropriate for the current weather, such as a waterproof or wind-proof jacket. "For most days in Texas' cold weather, wearing sweat suits will work," Ms. Houk said. "But for colder days, consider wearing a pair of synthetic long underwear underneath wind-resistant pants." If wearing a hat, wear something that covers the head and the ears, and can be taken off easily. Thin gloves will work for most people, as long as they don't make the hands sweaty, Ms. Houk said. "For a properly clothed person, 20 degrees Fahrenheit and above is suitable for exercising outdoors," Ms. Houk said. "Comfort should also be considered." If a person feels more comfortable working out indoors, if the outside temperature is too cold for them, there are options available. The fitness center offers a variety of equipment for people to exercise on, such as treadmills and elliptical machines. Personally-owned equipment is also a great indoor alternative to cold weather exercise. For more details about cold weather exercise, visit www.amaasportsmed.org or call 652-2300.

SPORTS BRIEFS

Half Marathon Relay
A Holiday Cheer Half Marathon Relay takes place Dec. 1 at 11 a.m. at Eberle Park. Each leg of the relay is 3.25 miles. Each team should have four people. There will be awards for first, second and third place team finishes. Stop by the fitness center to pre-register by Tuesday. The event is open to all Department of Defense ID cardholders age 14 and older. For more information, call the fitness center at 652-2955.

Racquetball Tournament
The fitness center holds its inaugural racquetball tournament Dec. 10-11 in Hangar 71. Individuals and teams will be placed in one of three groups: beginner, novice and expert, in men's and women's divisions. This tournament is free and is open to valid Department of Defense ID card holders age 18 and older. For more details and to sign up, call the fitness center at 652-2955.

One, two, three, four, off the couch and out the door

Outdoor activities provide children with exercise during holidays

By Jennifer Valentin
Wingspread staff writer

For most children, exercise means playing on the jungle gym or participating in gym class. But when school is out for the holidays, and there is no gym class or recess time, children should find other ways to keep up their level of physical activity. Children benefit from exercise, according to the Kids Health Web site. A child who is active has stronger muscles and bones, has a leaner body, is less likely to be overweight, will have a decreased risk of developing Type 2 Diabetes and will have a better outlook on life. In addition to the health benefits of exercise, children who are physically fit will be able to handle physical and emotional challenges that come up during the

day, according to Kids Health. Exercise can be something children can do with other children or with their family when they are out of school for the holidays. Exercise can involve playing basketball in the driveway, playing soccer in the yard or taking a walk around the neighborhood. When children accompany their parents on errands, the parents should park far away from the building and they should all walk together. "Most children relate exercising to running, push-ups or sit-ups," said Coach Edward Padilla, Randolph Elementary School. "Over the holidays, however, children can walk around the mall, walk to check the mail or even walk the dog around the neighborhood." Children on base, for example, get together and enjoy the cooler weather by playing a game of football or basketball outside with other children, Coach Padilla said. The percentage of children who are overweight has more than doubled over the

past 30 years, according to Kids Health. Children are becoming more sedentary. Children need to incorporate more exercise into their daily routines. According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, and the Department of Health and Human Services, all children age two years and older should get 60 minutes of moderate to vigorous exercise most or all days of the week. With the food intake being greater over the holidays, children need to increase the amount of movement and exercise, Coach Padilla said. "By helping children participate in more physical activities, parents can encourage their children to become more active and lead a healthier life," Coach Padilla said. For further information, visit online at www.kidshealth.org.

Minor water leaks can lead to major problems, expense

By Jennifer Valentin
Wingspread staff writer

As the weather cools down, people tend to forget about water conservation. However, people should remember to check their homes, inside and out, for leaks, which can happen unexpectedly. Checking the toilets in the house is a good start when looking for leaks. "If you can hear water running in your toilet, or if you can hear it "self-flushing," that means you have a leak," said Kent Rohlof, base water programs manager. People can test their toilets for leaks by adding a few drops of food coloring or a dye tablet to the water in the tank, according to the San Antonio Water System. Don't flush the toilet,

however, instead, if the coloring appears in the bowl within a few minutes, that means the toilet has a leak that needs to be repaired. "A toilet with a bad or unseated valve seat can easily waste five gallons of water per minute," Mr. Rohlof added. Checking for standing water around the home's water heater, and checking valves such as cut-off valves, sprinkler valves and sink valves can also be beneficial when checking for leaks around the house, according to SAWS. Ice makers should be checked to see if they are dripping. People should also check for water stains on the floor near the refrigerator to ensure the icemaker is connected properly. Officials also recommend that people check the faucets in every room of their home.

"If residents learn to fix their own faucets when they encounter a leak, this will save them time and money in the long run," Mr. Rohlof added. "It's easy and will save money when it comes to water bills and plumber costs." However, residents are urged to check with the civil engineer help desk to make sure any repairs they do are correct. Leaks can also hide outside a home. Sprinkler systems and soaker hoses should also be checked on a regular basis, according to SAWS. Residents should keep a log of checking their sprinkler valves, heads, main line and the length of time watering takes place, to keep a low water bill. Off-base residents can check for flow on their meter outside. No one must be

using water inside or outside the home when this is done. According to SAWS, residents can check the movement on the fine flow indicator, which is a small triangle or diamond located on the meter. The meter should be watched five to 10 minutes to see if the fine flow meter moves. If it continues to turn clockwise, then leaks exist on the property and need to be checked out. "Checking for leaks around the home will help off-base residents keep their water bill costs down, and it will also help our Randolph residents assist us in keeping the base water costs down," Mr. Rohlof said. For more details about leaks and prevention, on-base residents can call the civil engineer section at 652-4668, and anyone can call SAWS at 704-7297.

